

## en pointe

Posted on Oct 30, Posted by [Lois Lowry](#) Category [Uncategorized](#)

I'm sorry I don't have a camera here with me because I am in Maine, and there is a wonderful strong wind, and Alfie is acting like Baryshnikov, leaping and twirling.

I stopped on the way up here to have lunch with my son, daughter-in-law, and two grandsons, who live in a suburb of Portland. It is my younger grandson, 5, who says so many oddball and amusing things that his parents keep a list. Yesterday was not particularly unusual but it's a good example. His older brother, 8, had called some neighborhood friends and invited them over to meet Alfie. When the doorbell rang it was the younger one who answered it and let in two children.

"There's Alfie," he said, pointing to the dog.

Then, gesturing toward me: "And over here we have a famous writer."

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I am only here for two days, in order to let in the exterminator tomorrow. It is MOUSE season, when the field mice seek warmth....and food....and find both in my house. I arrived yesterday afternoon and spent several hours cleaning up mouse droppings and throwing away the things they had opened and eaten, or half-eaten, in the pantry. They consumed an entire box of penne but left two boxes of spaghetti...go figure. Croutons...gone. I picture them viewing my pantry as a restaurant: "I'll have the penne, please, and a Caesar salad."

It's too bad so many children's books portray them as cute, and sweet. If you give a mouse a cookie...RIGHT. He then runs around your house, gnaws the woodwork, makes nests by unravelling your cashmere sweaters, and poops everywhere, including in the drawer where all

the silverware is kept.

I could do a new kind of picture book about mice but it would never be published because it would involve POISON and TRAPS. Hey! I could even do it in rhyme!

Little mousie, quit your bitchin'  
You are welcome in my kitchen.  
View the menu; take your pick:  
Cyanide, or arsenic?

I would title it "Goodbye Mousie" except that my friend Robie Harris has already used that title.

Tags: Untagged